

39th Field Battery

ROYAL CANADIAN ARTILLERY

World War II



by

Fred G. Holberton D.D., Lieut. RCA

Occasional Paper No.23

Lethbridge Historical Society

P.O.Box 974

Lethbridge, Alberta, Canada

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A product of

The George and Jessie Watson Memorial Computer Centre

Sir Alexander Galt Museum

Lethbridge, Alberta

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Printed in Canada
By the Lethbridge Historical Society
a chapter of the Historical Society of Alberta

Canadian Cataloguing in Publication Data

Holberton, Fred G., 1920-
39th Field Battery, Royal Canadian Artillery
World War II

(Occasional paper ; no. 23)
Includes bibliographical references.
ISBN 1-895379-04-0

1. Canada. Canadian Army. Royal Canadian
Artillery. 39th Field Battery--History--World
War, 1939-1945. I. Lethbridge Historical
Society. II. Title. III. Series: Occasional
paper (Lethbridge Historical Society) ; no. 23.
D768.15.H64 1991 358'.12'0971 C91-091478-8

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PREFACE

This historical record is brought about through the suggestion of Dr. Alex Johnston, the late Executive Director of the Lethbridge Historical Society. Alex had located a history of the 39th Field Battery CFA written after World War I by F.G. Holyoak. Alex received some enquiries about the 39th Field Battery of N.P.A.M. (Non Permanent Active Militia) days before World War II and asked me to prepare a written record of the 39th Battery in WWII.

The 39th Field Battery appears to have become a N.P.A.M. Reserve Unit in 1938 and continued as such until some time in the 60's. The main part of this document shows the activities of the personnel who have served both in the reserve and active units.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

My thanks to Mr. Wm. McLunan, Curator of Royal Canadian Artillery Museum, at Shilo, Manitoba for his assistance while reviewing Part I, Part II Orders and the War Diaries at Shilo, Manitoba. My daughter-in-law, Barbara Holberton of Edmonton, kindly entered my notes onto her Word Processor which was very helpful. Lieut. Edgar H. Middleton of Calgary, who reviewed the manuscript and provided insight. My thanks also goes to the Lethbridge Historical Society: President Douglas J. Card, Book Committee: Chairman Carlton R. Stewart, and members Ralph Erdman, Greg Ellis, Irma Dogterom. Mr. Andrew Johnstone who arranged the transfer of electronic data from one computer language to another.

Fred G. Holberton D.D., Lieut. RCA

ABOUT THE AUTHOR:

Fred G. Holberton, a native of Lethbridge, born to Elias John and Annie Elizabeth (Dunk) Holberton in 1920. A graduate of the Lethbridge school system, Fred enlisted with the 39th Field Battery RCA on mobilization in 1941.

After the war he was employed with the Department of National Revenue (Taxation), and later entered into a private accounting partnership.

In 1959 he joined the staff of the The United Church of Canada as a Field Secretary and remained with them until his retirement in 1985.

St. Stephen's College (University of Alberta) recognized his work and conferred upon him the Honorary Degree of Doctor of Divinity in 1971.

Fred is a member of the Historical Society of Alberta, and has acted as Treasurer of the organization since 1984.

39th Field Battery

RCA

Early Guns & Gunners

The first use of Artillery in Canada was recorded by Jacques Cartier. The incident took place in the hot summer of 1534 at what is now Port Daniel, on the north shore of the bay to which the explorers gave the name "Chaleur".

Twelve cannons were shot off into the woods at that time and when Cartier returned to Canada in 1541 he constructed a fort, which he named Charlesbourg - Royal, and to it he brought ashore a cannon from three of his ships. So began the placement of Artillery in Canada.

How long had cannons, which Cartier introduced into the military history of Canada, been in use in Europe? Guns are said to have been at the siege of Toulouse in 1218, and at the fortress of Seville in 1247.

England formed a Royal Regiment of Artillery on May 26, 1716 and Canada did this 155 years later. Between these dates Artillery was present in many of the battles that took place in Canada.

Today "A" and "B" Batteries of the 1st Regiment, Royal Canadian Horse Artillery, the senior artillery unit in Canada's regular army, are direct descendents of the two batteries formed in 1871.

Shuffling of Army units in 1905 saw two new field Batteries come into operation - the 25th at Lethbridge and the 26th at Regina. This came as a result of a 27 year old ex-cavalry man, John Smith Stewart (later Brig.Gen. J.S. Stewart) who served in the South African War in the Lord Strathcona Horse, being named to pioneer Artillery west of Winnipeg. Brig.Gen. Stewart commanded 4th Brigade RCA in World War I and later the 7th Brigade.

The 25th Field Battery from Lethbridge served in World War I with 6th Brigade Canadian Field Artillery and the 39th Battery, also in WWI, was with the 9th Brigade Canadian Field Artillery.

39th Field Battery C.F.A. was recruited in Lethbridge, Alberta from the City and surrounding district on the 11th of October 1915. The enlistments on the first day brought the Battery up to establishment.¹ The Battery trained at the Exhibition Grounds in Lethbridge and left the City on the 21st of February 1916 and arrived at St. John, New Brunswick on the 26th of February.

The Battery proceeded overseas on the SS Missanable on March 2nd, 1916. On arrival at

Bramshott, England they joined the 38th Battery of Winnipeg, Manitoba, the 40th of Hamilton, Ontario and the 35th Howitzer of Montreal, Quebec to form the 10th Artillery Brigade.

The Battery saw action in France, beginning July 13, 1916 serving at Ypres, The Somme, Vimy, Hill 70, Loos, Paschendale, to name a few locations of battle.

The Battery was in action till the end of the war - November 11th, 1918 and in March of 1919 they returned to Canada. They had suffered many casualties and as a unit, only 28 men under command of Lieut. F.S. Filmer marched to Lethbridge City Hall on March 13th, 1919. The Battery was demobilized at that time.

The Battery left one of their guns behind at Mons - it being one of the last to fire the last shots in WWI. An 18 pounder (No.3106, Carriage (42073) was placed on permanent display at the Mons War Museum.

A certified copy of the Act of Transfer and Records was sent to Brig. Gen. J.S. Stewart at Lethbridge by George Licope, Curator of the Mons War Museum in March 1962.

39th Field Battery 1938

The 39th Field Battery RCA (NPAM) was located in Lethbridge as of September 1st, 1938.

Capt. E.R. Clemis became the first Commanding Officer and other Officers on the first parade were Lieut. I.H. Gullion, Lieut. G. Homer Thompson, and Lieut. Claude Parsons. The Battery Sgt. Major was Harold Holberton.

Lieuts. I.H. Gullion, C. Parsons and WOII Holberton H. joined the 20th Field Battery, RCA, another Lethbridge unit, which had received mobilization orders on the outbreak of World War II in September 1939.

Capt. Clemis left for training at Kingston in February 1940 and Capt. C.G. Davidson assumed command until the Battery was mobilized in September 1941. Capt. Davidson had served in WWI with the 39th Battery and in October 1941 was promoted to Major and Recruiting Officer of MD13.

Lieut. I.H. Gullion later joined the 39th Battery at New Westminster and became Quartermaster Captain of the 21st Field Regiment RCA. Lieut. G. Homer Thompson joined the RCAF and was killed in action overseas.

Others who qualified as officers in the 39th Battery (NPAM) included L.H. Blackbourne, E.R. Borgal, R.M. Glover, H.S. Baker and L.S. Turcotte. Borgal and Baker later served in the R.C.A.F. and Glover joined the Paymasters Corps. Mr. Baker had also been Acting O.C. of the 39th Battery from April 1940 to January 1941.

WOII Harold Holberton served with the 20th Anti Tank (the later designation of the 20th Field) and saw action in Western Europe. He was awarded the Military Cross.²

Henry Viney who had served in the 20th RCA Battery NPAM for 10 years, became BSM (W.O.II) when BSM Holberton enlisted and he was later commissioned and proceeded to the training center at Gordon Head, B.C.

The 39th Field RCA (NPAM) was mobilized as the 39th Field Battery RCA (A) Serial 812 D, under General Orders 63/42 (effective 29 July 1941), to serve with the 21st Field Regiment RCA, 6th Division Home Defence. The 19th and 20th Field Regiments were also mobilized at that time to complete the Divisional Field Artillery.

Major W.R.R. Bradley came from Coastal Artillery to take command of the 39th Field Battery RCA (A). Capt. W.S. Wallace became Battery Capt.

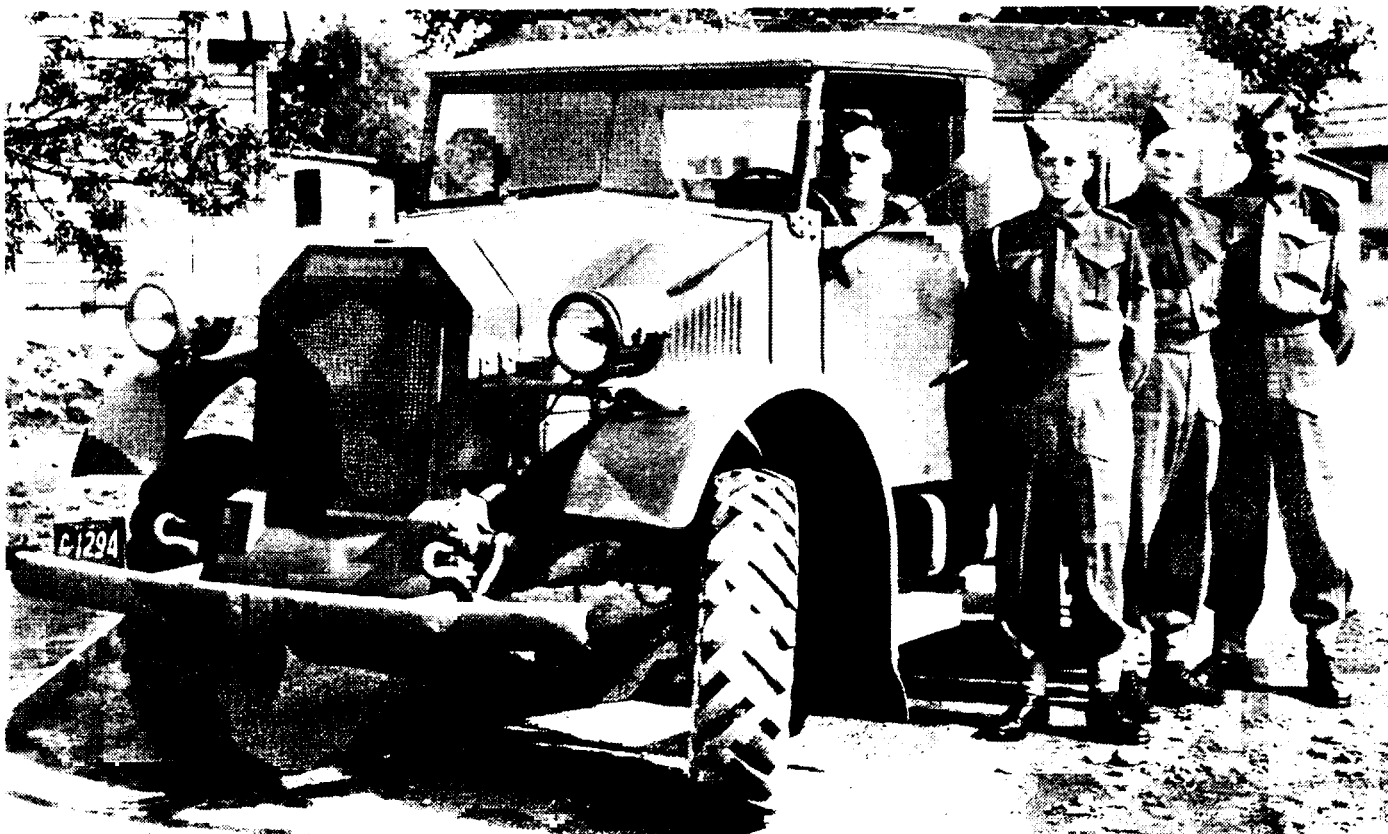
The first six enlistments on that opening day of recruitment were:

M66601 Middleton E.H.,
M66602 Chapman J.,
M66603 Wray M.N.,
M66604 Romeril C.G.,
M66605 Allan D.,
M66606 Duffy E.J.

45 Gunners went to Camrose CA (B) TC 13 in early October for basic training. They earned a distinguishable record - capturing five of the six trophies up for competition in the training center. The officer commanding stated that this was the best platoon that had ever gone through his training center.

Meanwhile 23 NCO's proceeded to Lac Megantic, Quebec for specialized training, and they too left an enviable record there.

Lieuts E.A. Lawrence and L.S. Hand had already been on active service since May, 1941 and returned to Lethbridge in October 1941 to join the 39th Battery. Mr. Lawrence had been commissioned in the 112 Battery in 1940. Other early Officers - Lieut. V.K. Croxford, from Rainey River, Ontario, and on active service since February 1941, joined the Battery in November, 1941.



September 1941 Lethbridge Barracks
Driver: Gnr. M.N. "Bud" Wray, L/Bdr. Rev. Victor E. Smith, L/Bdr. James Chapman, Sgt. Edgar H. Middleton
Photo courtesy of Edgar Middleton

Lieuts A.J. Cullen, W.F. Tuff and J.W. Warr had been commissioned in the NPAM January 1941 and joined the Battery on mobilization in September, 1941. Mr. Tuff had joined the 112th Field Battery as a Gnr.in 1938.

Lieut.R.B. Carruthers of Calgary, served with the 91st Field Battery (R), and was commissioned in November 1940 and joined the 39th Battery in November 1941. Lieut. W.R. Forrest of Edmonton joined the Battery also in November. He had been commissioned in August, 1941.

The 45 Gunners at Camrose proceeded to A4RCATC, Brandon for advance Artillery training and the NCO's came from Lac Megantic to Fort Garry, Winnipeg, for specialized training.

Training for these two groups was interrupted by the declaration of War by the U.S.A. and Canada on Japan, after Pearl Harbor, and the men were then posted to New Westminster, B.C., to become part of a defence against possible attack from the Japanese. (and possibly to serve in the Hong Kong Forces).

Part II Order No. 1 dated December 19, 1941 of the 21st Field Regiment RCA (A) included the authority for the formation of the Regiment, which reads as follows:

"Authority having been granted by NDHQ for the formation of the 21st Field Regiment RCA (A) Serial 812A, of the 6th Division, the Regiment is formed with effect from the 7th of November 1941 and to be comprised of the following units:

59th Field Battery Serial 812B
64th Field Battery Serial 812C
39th Field Battery Serial 812D

The Regiment to be concentrated at New Westminster Camp, New Westminster, B.C. as from 15 December 1941." ³

This same Part II order noted that Lt.Col. A.B. Gilbert, formerly GSOII MD7 was appointed to Command the Regiment and Major J.R. Dickie was TOS to become 2nd in Command.

The following officers also appeared as TOS the Regiment and posted to 39th Battery: Major W.R.R. Bradley, Capt. W.S. Wallace, Lieut. V.K. Croxford, Lieut. E.A. Lawrence and 2nd Lieut. W.R. Forrest. The same orders also showed Gnr (A/Bdr) Taylor, T.D., Gnr (L/Bdrs) Chapman J., Gibson, D., Holberton F.G., and 52 Gunners TOS of the Regiment and posted to the 39th Battery.

Part II Order No. 1, also listed the Acting NCO's who came from Winnipeg and TOS and posted to the 39th Battery. Bdr (A/BQMS) Bambrick, H.H., Gnrs (A/L/Sgt) Allan, D., (A/L/Sgt) Coutts G., Bdr (A/L/Sgt) Hunter, J.E., Gnrs (A/L/Sgts) Middleton, E.H., Ackerman, B.C., Harron, H.G., Lightbound, T.A., Broadfoot, D. and Gnrs (A/Bdr) Forsyth, J.E., McIntyre, A.I., Oughton, D., Llewellyn, W.F., McKenna, W.J.,

Richardson, D., Royle, J.J., Wensley, H.W., LaCroix, T.E.A., Allison, A., Clarke, A., Smith V.E., Young, C.C. And at the same time 2nd Lt's T.J. McKinley, J.R. Hall, L.M. Griffith, A. Finlayson, C.E. Brown, and H.H. Bowen were attached to the 39th Field Battery while the regular officers proceeded on training courses.

Part I Order No. 1 also listed 39th Battery Personnel for duties:

Duty Officer	Lieut. V.K. Croxford	December 18
Duty Sgt.	A/L/Sgt. Ackerman B.C.	December 16
Duty Sgt.	A/L/Sgt. Allan, D.	December 18
Duty Bdr.	A/L/Bdr. Chapman, J.	December 17

Lieut. I.H. Gullion also appeared in these Orders as attached to the 21st Regiment and designated as Regimental Quartermaster. Lieut. I.A. MacDonald also became Regimental Paymaster on the same date.

The following designations also appeared in Orders - the 39th Battery became first in line.

39th Battery "P" Pip
59th Battery "Q" Queen
64th Battery "R" Robert

The first 39th Bty AWOL reported in the Part II Orders was that of Gnr. LaCasse, T.C. - one day, 12 hours, 40 minutes for which he forfeited 2 days pay and was confined to barracks for 4 days. Gnr. Lacasse probably held the Battery record, if there was such a record, for being absent without leave continually - until the Battery went overseas. And A/L/Sgt. Royle, J.J. was the first to report in Part II Orders of the birth of a daughter.

Military supplies, guns and ammunition were nonexistent when the Battery arrived at New Westminster - but suddenly on the 24th of December, 1941 the Battery supplied part of the Convoy to move ammunition from Point Gray to Westminster Armories and two days later four 1-ton trucks, five 15-CWT's, and 12 F.A.T.'s were assigned to the 39th Battery. Eight 4.5 in. Howitzer Guns also arrived.

A/Bdr. LaCroix, T.E.A. was promoted to A/TBSM (W.O.II) and A/Bdr. Watson, H. was taken on strength.

After spending Christmas and New Year's confined to barracks because of an epidemic of Mumps, the Battery were given leaves, which were mainly spent in the area with new found friends in New Westminster.

1942 started with routine training and postings. Lieut. L.S. Hand arrived for duty. L/Bdrs. Streadwick D.E., and Kelly, J. R. and 29 Gunners arrived and were posted to 39th Battery. P/2/Lt. R.B. Carruthers, Lieuts. A.J. Cullen, W.F. Tuff and J.W. Warr also arrived, accompanied by a further draft of 21 Gunners.

Promotions appeared in January Orders - L.S. Hand, E.A. Lawrence, V.K. Croxford were confirmed as Lieutenants - and Lieuts. Croxford and I.H. Gullion were named Captains - 2 Lt. W.R. Forrest was promoted to Lieutenant.

A/L/Sgt. Hunter, J.E., became A/BQMS after reversion of rank to Bdr by A/QMS Bambrick, H.H., Gnr. Roach R.B., became A/L/Sgt. and appointed Regimental Sgt. Cook.

Many ranks went on various courses during this time.

Gnr. Bredo, F. was TOS and posted to the 39th Battery.

Part II orders in February noted discharge for medical reasons of Gnrs. Brown, R.L. and Hanson, O.B. More Promotions- Ackerman, B.C., Broadfoot, D., Harron, H.G., Middleton, E.H., Allen D. to become A/Sgts. and Gnrs. Muirhead, C.W. and Ontko, S., to be A/L/Bdr. A/TBSM LaCroix, T.E.A. was promoted to A/BSM (W.O.II).

Numbers of Home Defence Personnel (Draftees) had been attached to the Regiment and they were encouraged to "GO ACTIVE" with the 39th. One of the first to do this was Gnr. Downey, F.J.

The Regiment moved to tent camps at Nanaimo, B.C. in March 1942. Here was the beginning of vigorous training, and dispatching of many to various courses.

The 39th Gunners, McKnight, S.I., Wiest, W.R., and Howg, A.L. were medically reboarded Category E and discharged. The clothing allowance was \$27.00.

A/Sgts. Allen, D. and Harron H.G. became A/TBSM (W.O.II) Lieut. J.F. Brown was promoted to Captain and Gnrs. Romeril, C.G. and Cantwell, N.J. became A/L/Bdr.

Part II Orders posted Gnrs. Buechler, E. and Thompson, A. as AWOL. Thompson was reported in the hands of police in Montana. Later, in Part II orders both were declared deserters as of April 4th.

April saw the first large draft of 39th Battery SOS as reinforcements. L/Bdr Streadwick, D.E. and 50 Gunners were sent to the 5th medium Battery RCA. Ahlstrom, L.A., Alexander, C.W., Alm, A., Barg, H., Beattie, C.S., Berlando, R., Bobak, J., Bone, V.R., Borrows, W.A., Brady, G.M., Cameron, J., Clark, J., Coyle, J.L., Douglas, H.A., Douglas, R.W.B., Dow, L., Fallon, J.J., Fehr, J.C., Felardeau, E.J., Godsolve, H., Goldhawke, S.F., Granger, M.C., Halverson, V., Harris, G.G., Hopkins, C.A., Hopkins, R.R., Kayfish, V., Lowen, J.D., Mantler, A.H., Martz, R., McLaughlin, G.M., Moricz, A., Molnar, J., Mulner, W.J., Nunn, G., Passmore, M.R., Patapoff, W., Ponych, G., Powell, M., Shields, R.K., Stogrin, N.J., Tarleton, C., Voth, H., Wall, A., Waller, J.R., White, D.R., Wilbey, E.L., Willms, J., Wills, R.A., Young, D.

More recruits for Active Service - Allen, R.B., Clamen, J.J., Ogilvy, R.R., Masse, A., Rawluck, D.B., enlisted and were posted to the 39th Battery.

A/Sgt. Broadfoot, D. was attached to Headquarters, 21st Field Regiment.

Many promotions in April - all to Acting Ranks. Clark, A., Forsyth, J.E., McKenna, W.J., Watson, H. to

be A/Sgt. Muirhead, C.W. and Duffy, E.J. to be A/Bdr. Muirhead was later confirmed as Bdr. Lieut. E.A. Lawrence was promoted to Captain.

And more men left - L/Sgts. Coutts, G. and Lightbound, T.A. were SOS to 85th Field Battery. Gnr. Lopeter, A.L. went to A4 RCATC for Special Duty.

Major W.R.R. Bradley was SOS for an overseas posting and Capt. V.K. Croxford became Acting/OC of the 39th Battery.

Gnr. Fraser, A.S., was SOS on medical grounds to Depot for discharge. Clothing allowance of \$35.00 plus \$37.00 Rehabilitation Grant.

1 June 1942 Part I Orders posted A/BSM (W.O.II) LaCroix, T.E.A. and L/Sgt. Roach, R.B. to Regimental Headquarters.

And this month more discharges for medical reasons - A/Bdr. Smith, V.E. and Gnr. Brunt, G.E. L/Bdrs. Cantwell and Gibson, D. were promoted to A/Bdr. A number of Gunners - promoted to L/Bdr. without pay - Karp, E., Tilley, K.A., McBride, H.R., Teskey, E.J., Nettleton, H., and Daley, J.T. An additional Order indicated these were to be paid as L/Bdrs. Gnr. Dianocky, L.S. became A/Bdr. and A/BSM (WOII) LaCroix, T.E.A. was named A/RSM (WOI).

On 17 June 1942 the Battery proceeded to Shilo Military Base, Manitoba, for firing practice and returned July 6, 1942.

Promotions - Llewelyn, W.F., Chapman, J. Royle, J.J. and Romeril, C.G. were all confirmed as Bdrs. and with the exception of Romeril were promoted A/Sgt. Romeril received rank of A/BQMS. Gnrs. Bone, C.A., Dick, A.I., Blidook, G.M., Rosmus, Z.E., McKenna, W.J. became A/Bdr. On June 30 this entire group of new promotions were SOS to 114 Field Battery RCA.

Further discharges for medical reasons for A/Bdr. Taylor, T.D., A/Bdr. Chaplin, A., Gnrs. Hilt, J.E., Hills, B.H., Korpas, L.

Then Gnr. Carter, R. enlisted from Home Defence to 39th Active.

July and August were times for activities - "B" Troop went to Wellington for a Scheme. A Japanese submarine had been sited in Stuart Channel and Troops of 39th Battery was posted to the Hill in the vicinity of Nanaimo Military Hospital. "A" Troop went to Otter Point and "B" Troop later went on a Scheme to Nanaimo River.

A/Sgt. Lightbound, T.A. returned to RHQ from 24 Field Regiment.

Capt. W.S. Wallace was SOS to Serial 1610 MD 10. L/Sgts. Richardson, D. and Wensley, H.E. left the Battery on transfer to 115th Field Battery, 25th Field Regiment.

Deserter Buechler, E. had been apprehended and a court martial was convened. Lieut A.J. Cullen was named as his defending officer.

Two Gunners TOS - Tees, P.J. and Ward, H.W.
Sgt. Thorman, G.E. was promoted to P/2/Lt.
L/Sgt. Tilley, K.A. named A/Sgt. and A/Bdr.
Holberton, F.G. to be L/Sgt. Lieut. L.S. Hand was
promoted to Captain.

October Gnrs. Bradley W.P., McCready, T.H.,
Ingalls, D.R., Pieschuk, J. and Martin, S.I. were SOS to
24th Field Regiment RCA.

The 39th Battery celebrated their first Anniversary
as Active Service by attending a special Banquet and
dance at the Plaza Hotel in Nanaimo. The entire unit,
smartly dressed in Walking-Out uniforms presented a
splendid appearance as they marched from the Camp
to the Hotel.

Capt. V.K. Croxford, acting O.C. presided as
toastmaster. Bdr. A.G. Lynch-Staunton proposed the
toast to the King, while the toast to the Royal
Regiment of Artillery was proposed by Capt. E.A.
Lawrence. Major Dickie 2 I/C of the Regiment replied
to the toast.

Lieut. A.J. Cullen with Bdr. E. Karp at the piano
lead a popular sing-song - particularly one entitled
"The Hills of North Vancouver". An Army Orchestra
supplied music for the dance until 1:00 A.M.

In November word was received that the court
martial sentence imposed on Gnr. Buechler, E. was
quashed by the Judge Advocate General.

26 November 1942 A/Sgt. Clarke, A. was killed on
Highway #1 at 1630 hours. He was on his motorcycle
which collided with an army truck. On the 28th
Requiem Mass was held at Jenkins Funeral Home in
Nanaimo. The 39th Battery paraded an armed party
and the escort for the Funeral Procession to the CPR
Dock.

Gnr. Buechler, E. was transferred to 59th Battery.

And promotions - L/Bdrs. Anderson, G.M., Karp,
E., Gareau, A. to be A/Bdr. Gnrs. Wurzer, D.E. and
Cooper, V.L. to be L/Bdr. A/Bdrs. Nettleton, H.,
Teskey, E.J. and Duffy, E.J. to be L/Sgt. A/TBSM
Middleton, E.H. was confirmed as TBSM (W.O.II).

L/Sgt. Duffy, E.J. was confirmed as Sgt. and
confirmed as Bdrs. were Anderson, G.M., Lynch-
Staunton, A.G., McBride, H.R. and Sullivan, K.

Lieut. W.R. Forrest was SOS to MD13 and SOS to
MD12 were Sgts. Forsyth, J.E., Duffy E.J. Bdrs.
Anderson, G.M., Lynch-Staunton, A.G., McBride,
H.R., Sullivan, K. and Gnrs. Hough G., Duval, J.R.,
McKenna, G., Mackintosh, J.A., Tyrer, K., Wray, M.N.
and Boudreau, G.J.

Gnr. Bullis, A.R. was SOS to MD11

1943 saw a much reduced Battery of Active
Service Personnel - many now had gone to serve as
reinforcements overseas and their places were taken
by Home Defence soldiers. The Battery became
heavily involved in training these personnel and many
of the original active still remaining were anxious to
follow the others.

Some officer changes in early 1943.

Capt. E.A. Lawrence was medically reboarded to
Cat "D" and Capt. L.S. Hand left for Debert.

Sgt. Broadfoot, D. was named P/2/Lt. and Capt.
V.K. Croxford became Major and OC 59 Battery and
Lieut. R.B. Carruthers promoted to Capt.

Capt. J.F. Brown of the 64th Battery was
transferred to the 39th Battery to become Acting O.C.

TOS Active from Home Defence Ogilvy, R.R. and
Gregory, R.G.

Promotions - Gnrs. Penner, J., Gregory, R.G.,
Allen, R.B., Ogilvy, R.R. to be L/Bdr. A/Bdr. Downey,
F.J. to be A/Sgt. and confirmation BQMS for Hunter,
J.E.

The Battery left Nanaimo 1 March 1943 to again
live in tents at Port Alberni, B.C. and the Active
Service Personnel were being rapidly promoted in the
new role of instructors.



"B" Troup 39th Battery Port Alberni B.C. April 1943

Rear: Sgt. D. Gibson, Sgt. Fred Holberton, Lieut. Allen Cullen,
BSM (W.O.II) Hope Harron, Sgt. Elmer Teskey, Sgt. Hugh Watson.
Front: Sgt. Andy Allison, Sgt. Howard Bambrick, Sgt. Tom Daley.

Photo courtesy of Fred Holberton

L/Bdrs. Gregory, R.G. and Penner, J. to be A/Bdr.
Gnr. Tees, P.J. to be L/Bdr. Lieut. T.J. McKinley to be
Capt. and transfers of Lieut. W.F. Tuff to 19 Field
Regiment RCA and L/Bdr. Tees, P.J. to 24 Field
Regiment.

L/Sgt. Allison, A. left 39th Battery on transfer to
RHQ.

TOS Active from Home Defence. Gnr. Ellard, J.A.
Chesney, L.E. and another large group of Gunners
(H.Def.) were TOS.

Gnr. Wolstoncroft, J. was SOS to #10 Provost
Corps.

A/Bdr. Dianocky, L.S. became A/Sgt. and
confirmed as Bdr., Bdr (A/Sgt.) Oughton, D. was
confirmed as Sgt.

17 April 1943 the Battery moved to Willows Park Camp, Victoria and then began the process of preparing for overseas.

Sgt. Coutts, G. returned from the 24th Field Regiment and was posted to the 59th Battery.

2/Lts. B.C. Ackerman and G. Thorman were promoted to Lieuts. L/Bdr. Lawrence, R. to be acting Bdr. and Cantwell, N.J., Gareau, A., Holberton, F.G., Allison, A. were confirmed as Bdr. while Gibson, D., McIntyre, A.I. and Tilley, K.A. were confirmed as Sgt. Bdr. Allison was promoted A/Sgt. Sgt. Bredo, F. to become A/TBSM (W.O.II).

And some more officers left - Capt. T.J. McKinley and P/2/Lt. D. Broadfoot went to the 24th Field Regiment while Capts. E.A. Lawrence and I.H. Gullion were transferred to HQ RCA 6 Cdn. Div.

The long awaited day - heading overseas - on 22 May 1943 the remaining Members of the Battery and Regiment left for Petawawa arriving on the 26th of May and from there departed on 12 August to Debert, N.S.

Lieut. W.F. Tuff returned from the 19th Field Regiment. Lieut. J.W. Warr was posted to 64th Battery and Major G.H.V. Naylor was named O.C. of the 39th Battery.

All Home Defence personnel were posted to the 24th Field Regiment with BSM (WOII) Allen, D., Bdr. Gareau, A., Gnr. Davidson, R., L/Sgt. Lightbound, T.A. and L/Sgt. Kelley, J.R.

Promotion of WOII TBSM Middleton, E.H. to BSM was announced and Part II Orders posted A/Bdr. Ogilvy, R.R. to be L/Sgt. L/Bdr. Allen, R.B. to be A/Bdr. and Gnr. Kyle, K.E. to be L/Bdr.

During the time at Petawawa all ranks proceeded on furlough, in preparation for the trip overseas.

Part II Orders in June confirmed A/WOI LaCroix, T.E.A. as WOI and A/Bdrs. Doe, J.M. and Young, C.C. as Bdrs.

Further promotions while in Petawawa included Daley, J.T., Gregory, R.G., Nettleton, H., Muirhead, C.W., Ogilvy, R.R. and Teskey, E.J. as confirmed Bdrs. Promoted as L/Sgt. were Gregory, R.G., Ogilvy, R.R. Muirhead, C.W., and Cantwell, N.J.

Gnr. LaCasse, T.C. was given permission to marry and did this on 20 July 1943.

Part II Order No. 87, 27 August 1943. Aboard Queen Mary listed Officers:

Majors V.K. Croxford, G.H.V. Naylor
Capts. J.F. Brown, R.B. Carruthers
Lieuts R.C.W. Lapper, A.J. Cullen,
J.W. Warr, B.C. Ackerman, G. Thorman,
H.W. Wensley, W.F. Tuff.

In the same Part II Orders appeared this entry - "Having embarked in Canada on 26 August 1943, all personnel listed in Appendix "B" are SOS Canadian Army (CANADA)".

The other ranks listed hereunder represented the last members of the original recruitment in 1941, plus some other Home Defence personnel turned active, who boarded the Queen Mary on August 26th.

R.S.M. (W.O.I) LaCroix, T.E.A., TBSM (W.O.II) Harron, H.G., BSM (W.O.II) Middleton, E.H., BQMS Hunter, J.E., Sgt. (A/WOII) Bredo, F., Sgts. Oughton, D., Bambrick, H.H., Coutts, G., Gibson, D., McIntyre, A.I., Ontko, S., Tilley, K.A. and Watson, H. L/Sgts. Daley, J.T., Nettleton, H., Ogilvy, R.R., Teskey, E.J., A/Sgts. Allison, A. and Dianocky, L.S., L/Sgts. Penner, J. and Roach, R.B., Bdrs. Allen, R.B., Cantwell, N.J., Carlberg, C.W., Doe, J.M., Downey, F.J., Gregory, R.G., Koller, E.F., Wurzer, D.E., Young, C.C., Lawrence, R., Muirhead, C.W. and L/Bdrs. Cooper, V.L. and Pobuda, E.J.

Gnrs. Chesney, L.E., Clamen, J.J., Ellard, J.A., Karp, E., Kyle, K.A., LaCasse, T.C., LeFrancois, M.L., Masse, A., Rawluk, D.B.

The Regiment disembarked at Grenoch, Scotland on 1 September 1943 and proceeded to Cobham Camp in Surrey, England. While here Sgt. Foryth, J.E. was TOS from No. 1 C.A.R.U. on 30 September.

The last entry in the WAR DIARY dated the 4th of October 1943 the Regiment was disbanded under General Order 149/44 effective 11 October 1943. All Personnel were SOS to No. 1 C.A.R.U. and personnel joined the reinforcement pool and represented the 39th Battery well on all battle fronts.

Field Marshall B.L. Montgomery a non-gunner, made the following tribute to the artillery generally. A tribute in which Canadian gunners may justly claim a share. This memo was dated 27 June 1945.

"I would like to pay a compliment to the gunners, and I would like this to be passed on to every gunner.

The gunners have risen to great heights in this war; they have been well commanded and well handled. In my experience the artillery has never been so efficient as it is today; it is at the top of its form. For all this I offer you my warmest congratulations.

The contribution of the artillery to final victory in the German war has been immense. This will always be so; the harder the fighting and the longer the war, the more the infantry, and in fact all the arms, lean on the gunners. The proper use of the artillery is a great battle-winning factor.

*I think all the other arms have done very well too. But the artillery has been terrific and I want to give due weight to its contribution to victory in this campaign."*⁴

R.C.A. fatal casualties in all theatres in WWII were 177 officers and 1896 other ranks.

APPENDIX "A"

OFFICERS - 39th FIELD BATTERY RCA (WWII) * Known Deceased

LIEUT	H.H. BOWEN	LIEUT	H.F. JONES
MAJOR*	W.R.R. BRADLEY	CAPT*	R.C.W. LAPPER
LIEUT	C.E. BROWN M.C.	CAPT*	E.A. LAWRENCE
CAPT	J.F. BROWN	LIEUT	G.D. MACAULEY
CAPT*	R.B. CARRUTHERS M. in D.	CAPT	T.J. MCKINLEY
MAJOR*	V.K. CROXFORD	MAJOR	G.H.V. NAYLOR
LIEUT*	A.J. CULLEN	MAJOR	R.G. RICE (M.O.)
LIEUT	A. FINLAYSON	LIEUT	G.E. THORMAN
LIEUT	W.R. FORREST	MAJOR	H.F. TORNEY
LIEUT	L.M. GRIFFITH	LIEUT	W.F. TUFF
LIEUT*	I.H. GULLION	CAPT	W.S. WALLACE
LIEUT	J.R. HALL	LIEUT	J.W. WARR
CAPT*	L.S. HAND		

These listed hereunder were
Commissioned from the ranks: * Known Deceased

*	B.C. ACKERMAN	*	R.R. OGILVY
	D. BROADFOOT	*	D. RICHARDSON
	A.R. BULLIS		H. WENSLEY



Reunion of Officers - 21st Field Regiment June 1945 - Appledorn , Holland

Rear Row: L to R Capt. C.E. Brown, M.C., Capt. A.L. Finlayson, Lieut. T.A. Leader, Capt. R.C.W. Lapper, Capt. R.J. Mutcheson, Lieut. E. Tiernan, Lieut. R.F. Black, Lieut. B.C. Ackerman, Lieut. W.F. Tuff, Major G.H.V. Naylor, Capt. W.R. Adams, Lieut. J.W. Warr, Capt. I. McDonald.

Front Row: Lieut. M.A. Teeple, Lieut. Robinson, Capt. R.L. Morton, Capt. W. Burianyk, Capt. McConnell, Lieut. G.E. Thorman, Major V.K. Croxford, Capt. A.J. Cullen, Capt. L.S. Hand, Lieut. W.R. Forrest, Lieut. H.W. Wensley.

Photo courtesy of J.E. Forsyth

THE GUNNERS - 39th FIELD BATTERY RCA (WWII)
(Showing Rank while with 39th Field Battery) * Known Deceased

M66659	ACKERMAN, B.C.	Lieut.	K42757	DICK, A.I.	A/Bdr.
L18567	AHLSTROM, L.A.		M66616	DOE, J.M.	Bdr.
M66733	ALEXANDER, C.W.		M66629*	DOUGLAS, H.A.	Bdr. (A/L/Sgt.)
F76190	ALLARD, H.J.		M66694	DOUGLAS, R.W.B.	
M66605	ALLEN, D.	BSM (WOII)	M66672*	DOW, L.	
K46981	ALLEN, R.B.	Bdr.	D132030	DOWNEY, F.J.	Bdr. (A/Sgt.)
M66621	ALLISON, A.	Bdr. (A/Sgt.)	M66606*	DUFFY, E.J.	Sgt.
M66645	ALM, A.		M66644	DUVAL, J.R.	
M66618	ANDERSON, G.M.	Bdr.	D157508	ELLARD, J.A.	
M41982*	BAMBRICK, H.H.	Sgt.	M66683	FALLON, J.J.	
M66623	BARG, H.		M66690	FEHR, J.C.	
M66670	BEATTIE, C.S.		M66666	FELARDEAU, E.J.	
M66698	BERLANDO, R.		M66607	FORSYTH, J.E.	Sgt.
M66693	BLACK, G.C.		M66697	FRASER, A.S.	
M66695*	BLIDOOK, G.M.	Bdr.	M66647*	GAREAU, A.H.	Bdr.
M66707	BOBAK, J.		M66624	GIBSON, D.	Sgt.
M11202	BONE, C.A.	A/Bdr.	M66674*	GODSALVE, H.J.	
M66676*	BONE, V.R.		M66704	GOLDHAWKE, S.I.	
M66686	BORROWS, W.A.		M66710*	GRANGER, M.C.	
M66609*	BOUDREAU, G.J.	L/Bdr.	K15751*	GREGORY, R.G.	Bdr. (L/Sgt.)
L64327	BRADLEY, W.P.		M66671	HALVERSON, V.	
M66652*	BRADY, G.M.		M66641	HANSEN, O.B.	
M60385	BREDO, F.	Sgt. (A/WOII)	M66678	HARRIS, G.G.	
M66673*	BROADFOOT, D.	P/2/Lieut.	M66614	HARRON, H.G.	TBSM (WOII)
M66640	BROWN, R.L.		M66626*	HILLS, B.H.	
M66700	BRUNT, G.E.		L18574	HILT, J.E.	
M66654	BUECHLER, E.		M66660	HOLBERTON, F.G.	Bdr. (A/Sgt.)
M66677	BULLIS, A.R.		M66631	HOPKINS, C.W.	
M66646	CAMERON, J.		M66630	HOPKINS, R.R.	
M36754	CANTWELL, N.J.	Bdr. (L/Sgt.)	K73905*	HOUGH, G.	L/Bdr.
L483	CARLBERG, C.W.	Bdr.	M66706	HOWG, A.L.	
G57505	CARTER, R.H.		M62251*	HUNTER, J.E.	BQMS
M66634*	CHAPLIN, A.	A/Bdr.	L18580	INGALLS, D.R.	
M66602*	CHAPMAN, J.	Bdr. (A/Sgt.)	M66680*	KARP, E.	A/Bdr.
H62768	CHIASSON, D.J.		L18569	KAYFISH, V.	
A118512	CHESNEY, L.E.		M29250	KELLEY, J.R.	Bdr. (L/Sgt.)
D13209	CLAMEN, J.J.		M66656*	KOLLER, E.F.	Bdr.
M66684	CLARK, J.	A/Bdr.	M66696	KORPAS, L.	
M66612*	CLARKE, A.	Bdr. (A/Sgt.)	L66404	KYLE, K.E.	L/Bdr.
M66730	COOPER, V.L.	L/Bdr.	M66653	LACASSE, T.C.	
M66622	COUTTS, G.	Sgt.	M66663*	LACROIX, T.E.A.	WOI (RSM)
M66667*	COYLE, J.L.		M66649*	LAWRENCE, R.	Bdr.
L18568	DALEY, J.T.	Bdr. (L/Sgt.)	K49665	LEFRANCOIS, M.L.	
L154167	DANKOW, W.		M66620*	LIGHTBOUND, T.A.	Bdr. (L/Sgt.)
M66679*	DAVIDSON, R.		M66638*	LLEWELLYN, W.F.	Bdr. (A/Sgt.)
M66664*	DIANOCKY, L.S.	Bdr. (A/Sgt.)	M66635	LOPETER, A.L.	

M66692*	LOWEN, J.D.		M66648*	ROACH, R.B.	Bdr. (A/Sgt.)
M66662	LYNCH-STANTON, A.G.	Bdr.	M66604	ROMERIL, C.G.	A/BQMS
M66633	MACKINTOSH, J.A.		M66665	ROSMUS, Z.E.	A/Bdr.
M66625*	MANTLER, A.H.		M34004*	ROYLE, J.J.	Bdr. (A/Sgt.)
M66736	MARTZ, R.		M66681	SHIELS, R.K.	
D13208	MASSE, A.		M66639*	SMITH, V.E.(Rev.)	A/Bdr.
M66637	MCBRIDE, H.R.	Bdr.	M66712	STOGRIN, N.J.	
M66613	MCCREADY, T.H.		K16183	STREADWICK, D.E.	L/Bdr.
M66628	MCINTYRE, A.I.	Sgt.	M66617	SULLIVAN, K.D.	Bdr.
M66636	MCKENNA, G.		M66699	TARLETON, C.	
M66610	MCKENNA, W.J.	Bdr.(A/Sgt.)	M66608*	TAYLOR, T.D.	A/Bdr.
M11561	MCKNIGHT, S.I.		K15791	TEES, P.J.	L/Bdr.
M66655*	MCLAUGHLIN, G.E.		L18573	TESKEY, E.J.	Bdr. (L/Sgt.)
M66601	MIDDLETON, E.H.	WOII (BSM)	M66685	THOMPSON, A.	
M66661	MOLNAR, J.		M66619*	TILLEY, K.A.	Sgt.
M66702	MORICZ, A.		M66632*	TYRER, K.	
M143*	MUIRHEAD, C.W. M.M.	Bdr. (L/Sgt.)	M66658	VOTH, H.	
M66711	MULNER, W.J.		M66675	WALL, A.	
M66611*	NETTLETON, H.	Bdr. (A/Sgt.)	M31800	WALLER, J.R.	
H40738	NUNN, G.		K15788	WARD, H.W.	
K46971*	OGILVY, R.R.	Bdr. (L/Sgt.)	K15084*	WATSON, H.	Sgt.
M21002	ONTKO, S.	Sgt.	M17494	WENSLEY, H.W.	Lieut.
M28177	OUGHTON, D.	Sgt.	M66744	WHITE, D.R.	
M66642	PASSMORE, M.R.		M66689	WIEST, W.R.	
M66705	PATAPOFF, W.		M66703	WILBEY, E.L.	
M66650	PENNER, J.	Bdr. (L/Sgt.)	M66682	WILLMS, J.	
M66713	PIESCHUK, J.		M66687	WILLS, R.A.	
M66669*	POBUDA, E.J.	L/Bdr.	M66615*	WOLSTONCROFT, J.	A/Bdr.
M66643*	PONYCH, G.		M66603	WRAY, M.N.	
M66688	POWELL, M.		M66668	WURZER, D.E.	Bdr.
H204441*	RAWLUK, D.B.	L/Bdr.	M66627	YOUNG, C.C.	Bdr.
M37134*	RICHARDSON, D.	Bdr. (L/Sgt.)	M66651	YOUNG, D.	



Sgt. S. Ontko



Gnr. J.A. Mackintosh



Sgt. K.A. Tilley



Lieut. A.J. Cullen

Photos courtesy of Fred Holberton

THE GUNNERS - 39th FIELD BATTERY RCA (WWII)
(Showing Rank while with 39th Field Battery) * Known Deceased

M66659	ACKERMAN, B.C.	Lieut.	K42757	DICK, A.I.	A/Bdr.
L18567	AHLSTROM, L.A.		M66616	DOE, J.M.	Bdr.
M66733	ALEXANDER, C.W.		M66629*	DOUGLAS, H.A.	Bdr. (A/L/Sgt.)
F76190	ALLARD, H.J.		M66694	DOUGLAS, R.W.B.	
M66605	ALLEN, D.	BSM (WOII)	M66672*	DOW, L.	
K46981	ALLEN, R.B.	Bdr.	D132030	DOWNEY, F.J.	Bdr. (A/Sgt.)
M66621	ALLISON, A.	Bdr. (A/Sgt.)	M66606*	DUFFY, E.J.	Sgt.
M66645	ALM, A.		M66644	DUVAL, J.R.	
M66618	ANDERSON, G.M.	Bdr.	D157508	ELLARD, J.A.	
M41982*	BAMBRICK, H.H.	Sgt.	M66683	FALLON, J.J.	
M66623	BARG, H.		M66690	FEHR, J.C.	
M66670	BEATTIE, C.S.		M66666	FELARDEAU, E.J.	
M66698	BERLANDO, R.		M66607	FORSYTH, J.E.	Sgt.
M66693	BLACK, G.C.		M66697	FRASER, A.S.	
M66695*	BLIDOOK, G.M.	Bdr.	M66647*	GAREAU, A.H.	Bdr.
M66707	BOBAK, J.		M66624	GIBSON, D.	Sgt.
M11202	BONE, C.A.	A/Bdr.	M66674*	GODSALVE, H.J.	
M66676*	BONE, V.R.		M66704	GOLDHAWKE, S.I.	
M66686	BORROWS, W.A.		M66710*	GRANGER, M.C.	
M66609*	BOUDREAU, G.J.	L/Bdr.	K15751*	GREGORY, R.G.	Bdr. (L/Sgt.)
L64327	BRADLEY, W.P.		M66671	HALVERSON, V.	
M66652*	BRADY, G.M.		M66641	HANSEN, O.B.	
M60385	BREDO, F.	Sgt. (A/WOII)	M66678	HARRIS, G.G.	
M66673*	BROADFOOT, D.	P/2/Lieut.	M66614	HARRON, H.G.	TBSM (WOII)
M66640	BROWN, R.L.		M66626*	HILLS, B.H.	
M66700	BRUNT, G.E.		L18574	HILT, J.E.	
M66654	BUECHLER, E.		M66660	HOLBERTON, F.G.	Bdr. (A/Sgt.)
M66677	BULLIS, A.R.		M66631	HOPKINS, C.W.	
M66646	CAMERON, J.		M66630	HOPKINS, R.R.	
M36754	CANTWELL, N.J.	Bdr. (L/Sgt.)	K73905*	HOUGH, G.	L/Bdr.
L483	CARLBERG, C.W.	Bdr.	M66706	HOWG, A.L.	
G57505	CARTER, R.H.		M62251*	HUNTER, J.E.	BQMS
M66634*	CHAPLIN, A.	A/Bdr.	L18580	INGALLS, D.R.	
M66602*	CHAPMAN, J.	Bdr. (A/Sgt.)	M66680*	KARP, E.	A/Bdr.
H62768	CHIASSON, D.J.		L18569	KAYFISH, V.	
A118512	CHESNEY, L.E.		M29250	KELLEY, J.R.	Bdr. (L/Sgt.)
D13209	CLAMEN, J.J.		M66656*	KOLLER, E.F.	Bdr.
M66684	CLARK, J.	A/Bdr.	M66696	KORPAS, L.	
M66612*	CLARKE, A.	Bdr. (A/Sgt.)	L66404	KYLE, K.E.	L/Bdr.
M66730	COOPER, V.L.	L/Bdr.	M66653	LACASSE, T.C.	
M66622	COUTTS, G.	Sgt.	M66663*	LACROIX, T.E.A.	WOI (RSM)
M66667*	COYLE, J.L.		M66649*	LAWRENCE, R.	Bdr.
L18568	DALEY, J.T.	Bdr. (L/Sgt.)	K49665	LEFRANCOIS, M.L.	
L154167	DANKOW, W.		M66620*	LIGHTBOUND, T.A.	Bdr. (L/Sgt.)
M66679*	DAVIDSON, R.		M66638*	LLEWELLYN, W.F.	Bdr. (A/Sgt.)
M66664*	DIANOCKY, L.S.	Bdr. (A/Sgt.)	M66635	LOPETER, A.L.	

M66662 LYNCH-STAUTON, A.G. Bdr. after returning from overseas joined the Reserve Regiment in Edmonton and retired as Col. He also served a term as President of the Royal Canadian Artillery Association. During his service in Edmonton he was an aid-de-camp to the Lieut. Governor of Alberta. He later became a judge in the Court at Lethbridge.

M66601 MIDDLETON, E.H. BSM (W.O.II) also joined the 39th Battery reserve on his return to Lethbridge and was commissioned as Lieutenant.

M143 MUIRHEAD, C.W. A/Sgt. was awarded the M.M. while in action. His citation reads:

"During vicious and concentrated Enemy attack south of Calcar, he showed absolute determination and complete disregard for his own safety. He remained at his post refusing to take cover or to rest, and throughout the night and the next day he continued to maintain the all-important communications. His setting up and maintaining of the wireless ground station enabled the attack to be directed and controlled and materially assisted the operation of an entire brigade".

NAYLOR, G.H.V. Major, became a Member of the Order of the British Empire.¹⁰

K46971 OGILVY, R.R. L/Sgt. one of the early members of the Home Defence Troops to become Active with the 39th Battery, was commissioned overseas.

H204441 RAWLUK, D.B. Gnr., another Home Defence, who became active with the 39th Battery, was killed in action.

M37134 RICHARDSON, D. Sgt. became a Lieutenant and was attached as a reinforcement to Canadian Infantry. He was killed in action.

K15791 TEES, P.J. L/Bdr. served with the Canadians in the Korean War as a Captain and earned a D.F.C. His citation reads:

"At first light an Air O.P. from No. 1903 Independent Air O.P. Flight, R.A.F., piloted by Capt. P.J. Tees, the Canadian officer then serving with the unit, went up to engage opportunity targets. He enjoyed excellent shooting until the Chinese thwarted observation with a dense smoke screen. His gallant contribution on this and other occasions during his time with the Commonwealth Division, was to bring Tees the award of the Distinguished Flying Cross".¹¹

He is the only Canadian Artillery Officer listed as receiving a D.F.C. in the Korean War.

APPENDIX "C" SPORT CIRCLES

The 39th Battery had representatives on the various regimental teams - soccer, basketball, hockey, boxing etc.

Ken Tilley was a star goalie on the ice rink. Dave Gibson, a sharp shooting scorer. Bud Wray, Frie Bredo, Gil McKenna and Al Bullis were also part of the Regiment Team.

Sgt. Jock Watson was the Coach and Trainer of the Boxers in the Brigade Competitions.

Soccer "Slim" (6 1/2 foot 225 pounds) Wolstoncroft was the star goalie in all competition. Jack Gullion and Andy Allison as Fullbacks completed a strong defence. George Anderson at Center half, Tom Daley at Left half, Ken Tyrer, Ken Tilley (Center) and Jack Doe were other 39er's on this team. BSM D. Allen coached the Soccer Team.

APPENDIX "D" REUNIONS SINCE WORLD WAR II

The 39th Battery held reunions during the Labor Day Weekend in the years 1947, 1961, 1966, 1971, 1976, 1980, 1983, 1986, 1989.

Committee Chairmen for these events have been:

1961	1966	E. A. Lawrence
1971	1976 1980	D. Gibson
1983	1986 1989 1991	T.H. McCready

The 1966 Reunion celebrated the 25th Anniversary of Mobilization. 51 Battery Members and their Spouses were in attendance.

The 1986 Reunion, with the 59th and 64th Battery of the 21st Field Regiment was held at Nanaimo, B.C. We stayed in the Harborview Inn, held a successful Salmon barbecue and dance at the Officers Mess at the old Camp Site. Jim Warr and Joe Brown from Victoria set up the details for this weekend. The 59th and 64th Batteries wished to continue this style of Reunion and joined the 39th at Lethbridge in 1989 and plan to do so again in 1991.



THIS VOLUME WAS PRESENTED
TO THE
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Holberton, Fred G., 1920-
39th Field Battery, Royal
Canadian Artillery, World
War II
3 5057 00380 9232

39th Field Battery

RCA

Early Guns & Gunners

The first use of Artillery in Canada was recorded by Jacques Cartier. The incident took place in the hot summer of 1534 at what is now Port Daniel, on the north shore of the bay to which the explorers gave the name "Chaleur".

Twelve cannons were shot off into the woods at that time and when Cartier returned to Canada in 1541 he constructed a fort, which he named Charlesbourg - Royal, and to it he brought ashore a cannon from three of his ships. So began the placement of Artillery in Canada.

How long had cannons, which Cartier introduced into the military history of Canada, been in use in Europe? Guns are said to have been at the siege of Toulouse in 1218, and at the fortress of Seville in 1247.

England formed a Royal Regiment of Artillery on May 26, 1716 and Canada did this 155 years later. Between these dates Artillery was present in many of the battles that took place in Canada.

Today "A" and "B" Batteries of the 1st Regiment, Royal Canadian Horse Artillery, the senior artillery unit in Canada's regular army, are direct descendents of the two batteries formed in 1871.

Shuffling of Army units in 1905 saw two new field Batteries come into operation - the 25th at Lethbridge and the 26th at Regina. This came as a result of a 27 year old ex-cavalry man, John Smith Stewart (later Brig.Gen. J.S. Stewart) who served in the South African War in the Lord Strathcona Horse, being named to pioneer Artillery west of Winnipeg. Brig.Gen. Stewart commanded 4th Brigade RCA in World War I and later the 7th Brigade.

The 25th Field Battery from Lethbridge served in World War I with 6th Brigade Canadian Field Artillery and the 39th Battery, also in WWI, was with the 9th Brigade Canadian Field Artillery.

39th Field Battery C.F.A. was recruited in Lethbridge, Alberta from the City and surrounding district on the 11th of October 1915. The enlistments on the first day brought the Battery up to establishment.¹ The Battery trained at the Exhibition Grounds in Lethbridge and left the City on the 21st of February 1916 and arrived at St. John, New Brunswick on the 26th of February.

The Battery proceeded overseas on the SS Missanable on March 2nd, 1916. On arrival at

Bramshott, England they joined the 38th Battery of Winnipeg, Manitoba, the 40th of Hamilton, Ontario and the 35th Howitzer of Montreal, Quebec to form the 10th Artillery Brigade.

The Battery saw action in France, beginning July 13, 1916 serving at Ypres, The Somme, Vimy, Hill 70, Loos, Paschendale, to name a few locations of battle.

The Battery was in action till the end of the war - November 11th, 1918 and in March of 1919 they returned to Canada. They had suffered many casualties and as a unit, only 28 men under command of Lieut. F.S. Filmer marched to Lethbridge City Hall on March 13th, 1919. The Battery was demobilized at that time.

The Battery left one of their guns behind at Mons - it being one of the last to fire the last shots in WWI. An 18 pounder (No.3106, Carriage (42073) was placed on permanent display at the Mons War Museum.

A certified copy of the Act of Transfer and Records was sent to Brig. Gen. J.S. Stewart at Lethbridge by George Licope, Curator of the Mons War Museum in March 1962.

39th Field Battery 1938

The 39th Field Battery RCA (NPAM) was located in Lethbridge as of September 1st, 1938.

Capt. E.R. Clemis became the first Commanding Officer and other Officers on the first parade were Lieut. I.H. Gullion, Lieut. G. Homer Thompson, and Lieut. Claude Parsons. The Battery Sgt. Major was Harold Holberton.

Lieuts. I.H. Gullion, C. Parsons and WOII Holberton H. joined the 20th Field Battery, RCA, another Lethbridge unit, which had received mobilization orders on the outbreak of World War II in September 1939.

Capt. Clemis left for training at Kingston in February 1940 and Capt. C.G. Davidson assumed command until the Battery was mobilized in September 1941. Capt. Davidson had served in WWI with the 39th Battery and in October 1941 was promoted to Major and Recruiting Officer of MD13.

Lieut. I.H. Gullion later joined the 39th Battery at New Westminster and became Quartermaster Captain of the 21st Field Regiment RCA. Lieut. G. Homer Thompson joined the RCAF and was killed in action overseas.



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